



## *State of Wyoming Military Department Office of the Adjutant General*

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### **For immediate release**

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**WyMD-06-46**

### **MILITARY AERIAL FIREFIGHTERS TO TRAIN IN CHEYENNE**

CHEYENNE – The skies over southern Wyoming and northern Colorado will be dotted with military C-130 aircraft from May 2<sup>nd</sup> through May 5 as the Medicine Bow-Routt and Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests in Colorado and Wyoming and the 153<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing of the Wyoming Air National Guard host the training and recertification for military pilots flying firefighting missions. The military aircraft are equipped with the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) allowing them to drop retardant or water on wildfires. Flight operations will be based at the Wyoming Air National Guard base in Cheyenne.

Participating in the training are 400 air and ground personnel from the U.S. Forest Service, the 145<sup>th</sup> Air Wing from Charlotte, North Carolina, the 146<sup>th</sup> Air Wing from Point Hueneme, California, the 302<sup>nd</sup> Wing of the Air Force Reserve from Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the hosting unit aircrews from the 153<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing from Cheyenne, Wyoming. The week includes both classroom and flight training for military flight crews and civilian lead plane pilots.

The C-130s are equipped with special slide-in MAFFS units allowing them to drop up to 3000 gallons of retardant on wildfires. There are a total of eight MAFFS units. The military

aircraft are activated through U.S. Northern Command, based on an agreement with the Department of Defense when the civilian fleet of airtankers is committed.

During the annual training and re-certification, the units will drop water on target sites located on the Medicine Bow–Routt National Forests in north-central Colorado and south-central Wyoming. For further information on the MAFFS program, please call Rose Davis, U.S. Forest Service Public Affairs Specialist at (208) 387-5437.

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**MEDIA ADVISORY:** A media opportunity is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Friday May 5, 2006 at the Wyoming Air National Guard base in Cheyenne. For information on obtaining access to the base, please call Deidre Forster, Wyoming Military Department Public Affairs Officer at (307) 772-5253 before noon on Thursday May 4. Reporters should be prepared to show photo identification. In addition to interviews, a demonstration water drop from one of the aircraft will occur on the airfield.